

# THE SMALL BUSINESS ADVANTAGE

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**2nd Annual Veteran's Business Conference & Contract Connections**  
September 3-4  
Charleston Civic Center  
Info: (304) 344-2546 ext. 3

Helping small businesses start, grow and succeed.

**SBA**  
Your Small Business Resource

## WEST VIRGINIA SMALL BUSINESS RURAL & READY

The West Virginia District Office is launching its West Virginia Small Business "Rural & Ready" training initiative by offering "Doing Business With The Federal Government and SBA Certification Programs" workshops throughout the state.

This small business training is to encourage smaller and/or rural small businesses to learn the 'ins and outs' of doing business with the federal government.

"West Virginia small businesses are for the most part rural and we want to help them prepare to do business with the federal government through this initiative," said West Virginia district director Judy McCauley. "Rural small businesses have products

and services the federal government needs. The "Rural & Ready" initiative will provide training to help our small businesses enter the federal contracting arena."

The programs will provide an insight to small businesses



on what it takes to participate in the \$1.1 billion in federal contracts in West Virginia and \$600 billion nationwide. The workshops will impart information on what rural small businesses need to know and the steps they need to take to maximize federal business opportunities. Small busi-

nesses will learn how to locate government buyers and how to sell to federal agencies by unraveling the complexity of the government's buying process. Details will also be provided about SBA Certification Programs, including: Small Disadvantaged Business (SDB), 8(a), HUBZone and Service Disabled Veteran Owned Small Business (SDVOSB).

Training will be offered in the following locations: Kearneysville—August 18; Wheeling—August 26; Charleston—September 24; Huntington—September 25; and Parkersburg—September 30.

All workshops are free and open to the public but registration is strongly encouraged. For more information and to register, contact Naomi Bassel at (304) 623-5631 ext. 225 email: [Naomi.bassel@sba.gov](mailto:Naomi.bassel@sba.gov).

## HOMEOWNERS, RENTERS AND BUSINESSES URGED TO PREPARE FOR DISASTER BEFORE IT STRIKES

As West Virginia and numerous states recover from the destruction and loss caused by recent floods, tornadoes and wildfires, and with the Gulf and East Coast bracing for the 2008 Atlantic Hurricane Season, the SBA is urging the public to develop

an emergency plan before the disaster hits.

The SBA stands ready to help communities recover in the event of a disaster. Following the Gulf Coast Hurricanes of 2005, the SBA approved more than \$5 billion in

disaster loans to 102,700 homeowners and renters in the region. Businesses in the area were approved for 16,780 business disaster loans worth \$1.6 billion.

During the past two years the SBA has been preparing

See Disaster on Page 3

## NEW SBA ONLINE FINANCE COURSES AVAILABLE

### Top 10 Types of Businesses With SBA Loans in 2008

1. Full Service Restaurant
2. Limited Service Restaurant
3. Specialty Trade Contractors
4. Chiropractors
5. General Automotive Repair
6. Local Freight Trucking
7. Hotels & Motels
8. New Single Family Home Construction
9. Miscellaneous Store Retailers
10. Residential Remodelers

SBA has introduced two new free online finance courses to help small business owners with the basic principles of finance and borrowing.

The new self-paced courses walk business owners through steps that answer questions about what debt financing is, what loan programs are available, what small businesses should know about borrowing money, how to prepare a loan package and how loan requests are reviewed by lenders.

The **Finance Primer** gives an overview of the SBA's loan guaranty programs to help small businesses understand the variety of financial re-

sources, including those from SBA.

The **Loan Package** course includes small business links to related information, and refers course participants for direct support in preparing a loan request to appropriate resources that include SBA's district offices, SBA resource partners and lenders.

The finance courses can help entrepreneurs avoid some of the common mistakes made such as securing the wrong type of financing, miscalculating the amount of financing required, and underestimating the cost of borrowing money.

### Finance Primer:

**Guide to SBA's Loan Guaranty Programs at:**  
<http://app1.sba.gov/sbtn/registration/index.cfm?Courseld=29>

### How to Prepare a Loan Package at:

<http://app1.sba.gov/sbtn/registration/index.cfm?Courseld=28>

### YOUR KEY TO BUSINESS SUCCESS



## PATRIOT EXPRESS: LOANS FOR MILITARY COMMUNITY

SBA's Patriot Express initiative has enhanced programs and services for veterans and members of the military community wanting to establish or expand small businesses. Eligible members include: Veterans; Service-disabled veterans; Active-duty service members eligible for Transition Assistance Program; Reservists and National Guard;

Current spouses of any of the above; Widowed spouse of a service member or veteran who died during service or of a service-connected disability.

This lending program is available through approved SBA participating lenders which are listed on our web site at: [www.sba.gov/wv](http://www.sba.gov/wv). Loans are available up to \$500,000 and can be used

for most business purposes, including start-up, expansion, equipment purchases, working capital, inventory or business-occupied real-estate purchases.

For additional information, visit the web site previously listed or contact Tom White at (304) 623-5631 ext. 233 ([Thomas.white@sba.gov](mailto:Thomas.white@sba.gov)).

## SBA LAUNCHES TAX SAVINGS RESOURCE CENTER

SBA has created an online tax savings resource center to help small businesses understand how they can benefit from the 2008 economic stimulus package signed into law earlier this year.

The package includes the following tax incentives for businesses: a 50% bonus depreciation allowance on equipment purchased and placed in service in calendar 2008 and an almost 100% increase in the amount (from

\$128,000 to \$250,000) that a business can expense from equipment purchased and placed in the business tax year beginning in 2008.

The center, located at [www.sba.gov/stimulus](http://www.sba.gov/stimulus), contains three resources: a Fact Sheet, Depreciation Calculator and an Online Seminar.

These resources should help small businesses take advantage of the stimulus package. However, because

there are exceptions and additional requirements, small businesses are encouraged to contact their tax advisor to determine exactly how the provisions and implementing tax code of the 2008 economic stimulus package apply to their business. They can refer to the IRS web site: [www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=179227,00.html](http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=179227,00.html) for additional information regarding tax changes.



## DISASTER continued from page 1

to respond to major disasters by reengineering the Disaster Assistance program with a significant focus on customer service, direct accountability, and new technologies that have quadrupled processing capacity. In June 2007 the agency completed its Disaster Recovery Plan, which includes procedures to better handle future catastrophic disasters, and has begun testing this plan through simulations conducted with outside experts.

Disasters strike in all seasons. Since October 1, the SBA has responded to 205 declared disasters, of which numerous are presently open.

Disaster preparedness for homes and businesses should include:

**A solid emergency response plan.** Find evacuation routes from the home or business and establish meeting places. Make sure everyone understands the plan beforehand. Keep emergency numbers handy. Business owners should designate a contact person to communicate with other employees, customers and vendors. Ask an out-of-state friend or family member to be your “post-disaster” point of contact—a person to call to provide information on your safety and whereabouts.

**Adequate insurance.** Disaster preparedness begins with

having adequate insurance coverage—at least enough to rebuild your home or business. Homeowners and business owners should review their policies to see what is or isn’t covered. Businesses should consider “business interruption insurance,” which helps cover operating costs

deposit boxes offsite.

**Protection of windows, doors and roofing.** Installing impact-resistant window and door systems, or simple plywood shutters installed before a severe storm hits can enhance their ability to resist impacts from wind-borne debris. Hire a professional to



during the post-disaster shutdown period. Flood insurance is essential. To find out more about the National Flood Insurance Program, visit their web site at:

[www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov).

**Making copies of important records.** It’s a good idea to back up vital records and information saved on computer hard drives, and store that information at a distant offsite location. Computer data should be backed up routinely. Copies of important documents and CDs should be stored in fire-proof safe

evaluate your roof to make sure it can withstand a major wind storm.

### **A “Disaster Survival Kit.”**

The kit should include a flashlight, a portable radio, extra batteries, a first-aid kit, non-perishable packaged and canned food, bottled water, a basic tool kit, plastic bags, cash, and a disposable camera to take pictures of the property damage after the storm.

Additional preparedness tips for businesses, homeowners and renters are available on the SBA’s web site at

[www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance/disasterpreparedness/index.html](http://www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance/disasterpreparedness/index.html).

The Institute for Business and Home Safety ([www.ibhs.org](http://www.ibhs.org)) also has information on protecting your home or business. To learn more about developing an emergency plan, visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) or call 1-800-237-3239 to receive free materials.

The SBA makes low-interest loans to homeowners, renters and non-farm businesses of all sizes. Homeowners may borrow up to \$200,000 to repair or replace damaged real estate. Individuals may borrow up to \$40,000 to cover losses to personal property

Non-farm businesses and non-profit organizations of any size may apply for up to \$2 million to repair or replace disaster damaged business assets and real property. Small businesses that suffered economic losses as a direct result may apply for a working capital loan up to \$2 million, even if the property was not physically damaged.

To learn more about the SBA disaster assistance program, visit: [www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance/index.html](http://www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance/index.html).

## INCREASED BENEFITS FOR DISASTER VICTIMS

Under the Small Business Disaster Response and Loan Improvement Act of the 2008 Farm Bill there are increased benefits available for disaster victims.

Changes include:

- Increased loan limits—Eligible borrowers may take out a \$14,000 loan without collateral (up from \$10,000)
- Increased Disaster Loan Amounts—The disaster cap for businesses has increased to \$2 million (up from \$1.5 million). The 20 percent mitigation measure formula has changed from total loan eligibility to total loss eligibility.
- Economic Injury Loans to Nonprofits—SBA’s Economic Injury Disaster Loan program now includes private, non-profit organizations of all sizes.

- Net Earnings Clauses Prohibited—Borrowers are not required to make a supplemental payment for the first five years after repayment begins.

SBA’s low-interest federal disaster loans are available to homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes and private and non-profit organizations whose property was damaged or destroyed by disasters. SBA customer service representatives are available at disaster recovery centers throughout the affected areas to issue loan applications, answer questions, explain the application process and help complete applications.

To obtain a loan application, contact the SBA’s Customer Service Center by calling 1-800-659-2955 or emailing the center at [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov).

# SMALL BUSINESS WEEK NOMINATIONS

Each year, the U.S. Small Business Administration recognizes successful small business entrepreneurs and champions at Small Business

Week activities throughout the country. Each district office solicits nominations throughout the numerous avenues of the business community for outstanding candidates to recognize at local, regional and national levels. The West Virginia District Office is now seeking qualified nominees for its 2009 Small Business Week Awards Celebration. We would like to enlist your assistance and encourage you to sponsor individuals and businesses for one of our prestigious awards.

An independ-

ent panel of judges will select the 2009 West Virginia District Winners, who will then compete at the regional and possibly the National level during Small Business Week in Washington DC. The West Virginia District winners will be honored at the Small Business Week Celebration sometime in May or June.

The deadline for submitting nominations is Friday, November 28, 2008. For information, contact Rick Haney at (304) 623-5631 ext. 230 ([Richard.haney@sba.gov](mailto:Richard.haney@sba.gov)) or visit our web site at [www.sba.gov/wv](http://www.sba.gov/wv).

## Did You Know???

The SBA funds three different types of Resource Partners to enable FREE and confidential business counseling and training for small businesses.

If you want to start a business, or already own a small business, you can take advantage of these great resources!

Expert business advisors can assist you in financial projections, business plan, marketing strategies, and much more.

SBA Resource Partners include:  
Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), SCORE Chapters, and Women's Business Centers who can provide business counseling to all types of firms.

For a detailed listing, visit the Counseling & Training link our web site at: [www.sba.gov/wv](http://www.sba.gov/wv)

### 2008 Small Business Person



(l-r) Jim Pirolo, Governor's Office; Judy McCauley, SBA; Harry Siegel, HMS TECHNOLOGIES; Steve Roberts, WV Chamber of Commerce

## IRS E-UPDATES FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Keeping up with federal tax requirements is not always easy in today's fast-changing business environment. Even if small businesses and the self-employed use a tax professional's services, they still need to know and understand their tax responsibilities.

IRS e-News for Small Businesses offers small businesses and the self-employed

a real time saver. e-News is a bi-weekly newsletter that alerts businesses to what's new, hot and important. It's quick to read, easy to subscribe—and it's free.

IRS e-News features important upcoming tax dates, tips for small businesses tax compliance, special IRS announcements,

IRS services and products available to small businesses, and much more.

Subscribe to e-News for Small Businesses on [www.IRS.gov](http://www.IRS.gov) at <http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/article/0..id=154825.00.html>



## FREE ONLINE COURSE: FRANCHISING BASICS

Entrepreneurs considering franchising can now access a new online course from the SBA and FranNet to learn more about the franchising industry.

**Franchising Basics** is an introductory online course which provides three key sections that examine more than 10 essential areas of franchising, including *Is Franchising Right For You? And How To Choose The Right Franchise*.

The course also covers franchising options, strategies for growth, and pitfalls to avoid.

Course participants will be able to better understand franchising and decide if it is the best small business option for them.

The Franchising Basic course can be accessed at: <http://app1.sba.gov/sbtn/registration/index.cfm?CourseId=26>.

### The top 10 franchises for 2008 are:

1. **7-Eleven**
2. **Subway**
3. **Dunkin Donuts**
4. **Pizza Hut**
5. **McDonald's**
6. **Sonic Drive-In**
7. **KFC**
8. **InterContinental Hotels Group**
9. **Domino's Pizza**
10. **RE/MAX International**